

Love Shacks

Hot Rooms for Romantics



The Phineas Swann

195 Main St., Montgomery Center, VT, 802-326-4306, phineasswann.com, doubles from \$109.

For the all-important "bed" component of their B&B, the new owners of the Phineas Swann took a cue from their environs, where the snowfall routinely reaches record-setting heights. The inn's impossibly deep beds—memory foam stacked with feather beds stacked with mattresses—are each covered in a drift of a dozen pillows. Small wonder some couples don't emerge, still in their pajamas, until early afternoon.

When (or if) they do, their newlywed hosts, John Perkins and Jay Kerch, who reopened the Phineas last winter after a \$750,000-plus renovation, are ready with plenty of activity suggestions: evening sleigh rides, candlelit tapas dinners, antiquing expeditions (a former Manhattan dealer whose clients included Ethan Hawke, Kerch has a shop of his own nearby). If

you'd rather just soak in the hot tub or snuggle before the fireplace, well, that's fine, too.



Nebo Lodge

11 Mullins Ln., North Haven, ME, 207-867-2007, nebolodge.com, doubles from \$90.

It takes a bit of perseverance to get to the tiny Penobscot Bay community of North Haven—a four-hour drive to Rockland, then a 70-minute ferry—but that's a small price to pay for your own pristine, near-private island (roughly 400 call it home year-round). One of North Haven's sole two inns, Nebo Lodge offers just four guest rooms in winter, guaranteeing each couple a peaceful, secluded stay. Recently renovated by a group of residents, the nearly century-old inn has neat-as-a-pin rooms decorated with local artwork (chosen with help from neighbor and famous author Susan Minot); funky textiles by island daughter Angela Adams; and 100 percent Maine-made amenities, including hand-cured lemongrass soap.

There are no TVs, but you won't miss them—not with the 21-square-mile playground of regal pines and rocky shoreline outside and the cinematic canopy of stars twinkling above at night.



Old Inn on the Green

134 Hartsville New Marlborough Rd., New Marlborough, MA, 413-229-7924, oldinn.com, doubles from \$98.

If it's true that everybody looks better by candlelight, then guests look simply model-riffic at the Old Inn on the Green. The rustic inn seems perpetually bathed in mood lighting; even daylight does little to diminish its ambience. The excellent on-site restaurant is lit sans electricity with tapers and crackling hearth, and six of the property's sumptuous rooms have fireplaces.

The Old Inn's brand of low-key luxury, enthusiastically preserved by owners Peter Platt and Meredith Kennard, includes carefully chosen antique furniture, fine linens, and an absence of modern distractions (that's right, another place with few TVs). Done wrong, country charm can be cloying; here, it's nothing but romantic.



Rabbit Hill Inn

48 Lower Waterford Rd., Lower Waterford, VT, 802-748-5168, rabbithillinn.com, doubles from \$95.

Ensuring that an evening away stayed on a romantic course used to be as easy as hanging a "Do Not Disturb" sign on the doorknob. Now, thanks to Black-Berries, IM, and checking e-mail

"one last time" before dinner, amorous escapes often wind up as working weekends. Located in a corner of Vermont's remote Northeast Kingdom, Rabbit Hill's 15 bucolic acres are conveniently out of reach of most cell-phone service providers, and the inn's well-appointed rooms are blissfully free of TVs, telephones, and WiFi. Instead, guests enjoy connectivity of a different kind—one that comes with champagne on arrival, in-room massages, creative New American cuisine, and a signature turndown service that includes treats like maple sugar candy, soft harp chords, and flickering tea lights.

And if you must bring the kids...



The Yachtsman Lodge

Ocean Avenue, Kennebunkport, ME, 207-967-2511, yachtsmanlodge.com, doubles from \$325.

The Yachtsman's motel-like exterior belies the sophistication inside. Redesigned by celebrated Boston architect Peter Niemi, its 30 rooms are outfitted with supersoft duvets, Egyptian cotton sheets, CD players with Bose speakers, and French doors that open to private patios and marina views. But the Yachtsman's real year-round appeal is the welcome it gives to both the kids and the family dog—for an extra \$25 per day, Rover has the run of the room. Come winter, the cozy-chic lodge makes a good home base for exploring Kennebunkport and is filled with (tasteful, of course) holiday spirit. The town's annual December Christmas Prelude (held the first two weeks of the month) includes a tree-lighting ceremony and bonfire, caroling by candlelight, and shopping galore.